

Whereas George Springer was a union activist throughout his 20-year teaching career in New Britain;

Whereas George Springer succumbed on December 19, 2006, at the age of 74, after a long battle with cancer; and

Whereas George Springer is survived by his wife, Gerri Brown-Springer, 4 children, 10 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate honors George C. Springer, Sr. as a dedicated and pioneering leader, and a man of generous spirit who took on tough challenges with courage and compassion.

#### RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING ALASKA STATEHOOD

The resolution (S. Res. 49), recognizing and celebrating the 50th anniversary of the entry of Alaska into the Union as the 49th State, was considered and agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

##### S. RES. 49

Whereas July 7, 2008, marks the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Alaska Statehood Act as approved by the United States Congress and signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower;

Whereas the Alaska Statehood Act authorized the entry of Alaska into the Union on January 3, 1959;

Whereas the land once known as "Seward's Folly" is now regarded as critical to the strategic defense of the United States and important to our national and economic security;

Whereas the people of Alaska remain committed to the preservation and protection of the Union, with among the highest rates of veterans and residents in active military service of any State in the Nation;

Whereas Alaska is the northernmost, westernmost, and easternmost State of the Union, encompassing an area one-fifth the size of the United States;

Whereas the State of Alaska has an abundance of natural resources vital to the Nation;

Whereas Alaska currently provides over 16 percent of the daily crude oil production in the United States and has 44 percent of the undiscovered oil resources and 36 percent of undiscovered conventional gas in the United States;

Whereas Alaska's 34,000 miles of shoreline form a gateway to one of the world's greatest fisheries, providing over 60 percent of the country's commercial seafood harvest;

Whereas over 230 million acres of Alaska are set aside in national parks, wildlife refuges, national forests, and other conservation units for the benefit of the entire country;

Whereas over 58 million acres are designated wilderness in Alaska, representing 55 percent of the wilderness areas in the United States;

Whereas Alaska Natives, the State's first people, are an integral part of Alaska's history, and preserving the culture and heritage of Alaska's Native people is of primary importance;

Whereas the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971 signaled a new era of economic opportunity for Alaska Natives;

Whereas Alaska's Native people have made major contributions to the vitality and success of Alaska as a State;

Whereas the people of Alaska represent the pioneering spirit that built this great Nation

and contribute to our cultural and ethnic diversity; and

Whereas the golden anniversary, on January 3, 2009, provides an occasion to honor Alaska's entry into the Union: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That Congress recognizes and celebrates the 50th anniversary of the entry of Alaska into the Union as the 49th State.

#### NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

The resolution (S. Res. 78), designating April 2007 as "National Autism Awareness Month" and supporting efforts to increase funding for research into the causes and treatment of autism and to improve training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism, was considered and agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

##### S. RES. 78

Whereas autism is a developmental disorder that is typically diagnosed during the first 3 years of life, robbing individuals of their ability to communicate and interact with others;

Whereas autism affects an estimated 1 in every 150 children in the United States;

Whereas autism is 4 times more likely to occur in boys than in girls;

Whereas autism can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or other factors;

Whereas it costs approximately \$80,000 per year to treat an individual with autism in a medical center specializing in developmental disabilities;

Whereas the cost of special education programs for school-aged children with autism is often more than \$30,000 per individual per year;

Whereas the cost nationally of caring for persons affected by autism is estimated at upwards of \$90,000,000,000 per year;

Whereas despite the fact that autism is one of the most common developmental disorders, many professionals in the medical and educational fields are still unaware of the best methods to diagnose and treat the disorder; and

Whereas designating April 2007 as "National Autism Awareness Month" will increase public awareness of the need to support individuals with autism and the family members and medical professionals who care for individuals with autism: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2007 as "National Autism Awareness Month";

(2) recognizes and commends the parents and relatives of children with autism for their sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of children with autism and for absorbing significant financial costs for specialized education and support services;

(3) supports the goal of increasing Federal funding for aggressive research to learn the root causes of autism, identify the best methods of early intervention and treatment, expand programs for individuals with autism across their lifespans, and promote understanding of the special needs of people with autism;

(4) stresses the need to begin early intervention services soon after a child has been diagnosed with autism, noting that early intervention strategies are the primary therapeutic options for young people with autism, and that early intervention signifi-

cantly improves the outcome for people with autism and can reduce the level of funding and services needed to treat people with autism later in life;

(5) supports the Federal Government's more than 30-year-old commitment to provide States with 40 percent of the costs needed to educate children with disabilities under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.);

(6) recognizes the shortage of appropriately trained teachers who have the skills and support necessary to teach, assist, and respond to special needs students, including those with autism, in our school systems; and

(7) recognizes the importance of worker training programs that are tailored to the needs of developmentally disabled persons, including those with autism, and notes that people with autism can be, and are, productive members of the workforce if they are given appropriate support, training, and early intervention services.

#### 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The resolution (S. Res. 84), observing February 23, 2007, as the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire, honoring the distinguished life and legacy of William Wilberforce, and encouraging the people of the United States to follow the example of William Wilberforce by selflessly pursuing respect for human rights around the world, was considered and agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

##### S. RES. 84

Whereas, at the age of 21, William Wilberforce was elected to the House of Commons of Great Britain;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce and his colleagues actively engaged in many initiatives with the sole purpose of renewing British culture at the turn of the 19th century in order to bring about positive social change;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce advocated prison reform that equally respected justice and human dignity, and encouraged reconciliation;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce sought to improve the conditions for, and minimize the use of, child laborers;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce dedicated his life to ending the British slave trade and the abolition of slavery despite forceful opposition;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce was mentored by former slave trader and author of the hymn "Amazing Grace," John Newton, on the horrors and inhumanity of the slave trade;

Whereas approximately 11,000,000 human beings were captured and taken from Africa to the Western Hemisphere to be sold as commodities and forced into slavery and bondage;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce fought for 20 years in the House of Commons to pass legislation banning the slave trade;

Whereas, on February 23, 1807, Parliament passed a bill banning the slave trade in the British Empire as a direct result of the efforts of Mr. Wilberforce;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce inspired and encouraged those who opposed slavery in the United States, including political leaders like John Quincy Adams, and spread a message of hope and freedom throughout the United States;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce labored for 46 years to abolish the institution of slavery in